



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND  
REGIONAL INTEGRATION



## POLICY BRIEF

### Priority Intervention Area 4: Gender and Pastoral Disaster Risk Management in the IGAD Region

#### Introduction

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)'s Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) has since 2013 inspired and guided regional and national priorities to counter drought emergencies in East and Horn of Africa countries of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. The IDDRSI Strategy (2019-2024) acknowledges that gender issues impact the **pastoral disaster risk management** priority intervention area (PIA 4). A gender analysis was undertaken for the IDDRSI Strategy, Regional Programming Paper and the Country Programming Papers (CPP) (IGAD, 2016)<sup>1</sup>. This brief examines the critical gender issues relating to disaster risk management and the implications for drought resilience-building efforts in the region. It based on the review of the gender analysis report.

#### Women and disasters in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs)

Women are the more adversely affected by disasters and conflict. According to Global Gender and Climate Change Alliance (2010)<sup>2</sup>, women and children are 14 times more likely than men to die during a disaster. Also, there is a direct relationship between women's risk of being killed during a disaster and their socio-economic status - defined by access to information, economic resources, and ability to exercise personal freedom of choice. In refugee settings, women and girls are exposed to higher risks than men, including conflict over scarce resources. Compounding this, social strains in such situations aggravate stress levels in the family, resulting in increased incidences of domestic violence. Over time, poverty and inequality have shaped women's and men's vulnerability to disaster and the impacts of climate change. Ultimately, this affects their capacity to cope and recover in the post-disaster period.

Previous research is blind to critical information on women's experiences and knowledge in environmental climate change, water resources development and management, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Women's acquired knowledge and expertise result from the gender division of labour and gender roles and responsibilities in the community. Since women and men are affected differently by disaster and climate change, their different vulnerabilities and capacities must be analysed, and their gender-specific concerns and priorities addressed.

Climate change effects have added pressure to the fragile environment in the ASALs and undermined communities' abilities to cope with recurrent droughts. Moreover, drought is not the only danger that arises from climate change, but it also triggers floods, landslides, disease/pest outbreaks. The projected rising sea levels threaten coastal settlements, especially in Kenya, Eritrea, Somalia, and Djibouti. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has predicted between 18 cm and 59 cm sea level rise by 2100. On the Kenyan coast, Mombasa could lose 17% of its area with a 30 cm sea level rise. In Djibouti, which has most of its population around the capital Djibouti City, the country is in danger of rising sea levels polluting its aquifers and leading to salinisation.

1. IGAD (2016): Gender Analysis of the Country Programming Papers (CPPs): To End Drought Emergencies in the Horn of Africa. Vol 2.

2. Gender and Climate Change Alliance (2010): Gender and Climate Change Policy Brief 3.

## Climate change-induced migration and women

The pastoral and agro-pastoral production livelihood system in the ASALs is increasingly experiencing climate extremes and harsh environmental circumstances. Most parts of ASALs experience one primary agricultural season, and at the end of this sole rainy season, pastoral communities move herds in search of water and grass. Partly because of climate change, the start of the rainy season is no longer predictable. Dry spells in the ASALs characterise the period from November to February, when the hunger gap occurs. When the hunger gap commences, pastoralists traditionally migrate for three to four months to other areas searching for water and pasture. Depending on the severity of the dry season, livestock is lost. As such, the struggle for natural resources and subsequent seasonal migration offers an opportunity to raid neighbouring tribes to restock herds (Mkutu, 2005).<sup>3</sup> Specifically, migration has often resulted in ethnic-based clashes over the control and access to natural resources. Overall, resource scarcity induced by climate changes has fuelled insecurity as communities resort to conflict as a coping mechanism for extreme weather changes.

Pastoralists also frequently move outside their national boundaries, searching for pasture and freshwater resources. Drought displaces many communities that lose their traditional means of livelihood (pastoralism, crop farming or fishing) and creates a generation of 'climate refugees', often resulting in conflicts between communities within and across borders. People and animal movement across borders also often causes conflicts and frequently necessitates regional interventions to resolve disputes or prevent a recurrence (Mwaura, 2005)<sup>4</sup>.

Drought occurrences have become more frequent and have taken a regional dimension. According to a report by the International Food Policy Research Institute, there is some indication that droughts increased in frequency in recent decades (Headey and Kennedy, 2012).<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the African Development Bank notes that the **"chances of drought occurring in parts of the region have increased from a probability of one in every six to eight years to a probability of one in every two-three years"**. The 'epicentre' of the recent drought (in terms of intensity and coverage) appears to have moved from the highland crop growing areas to the ASALs. Indeed, previous literature examining livelihoods in the ASALs notes that households that depend on agro-pastoralism and pastoralism have become more vulnerable to poverty due to significant fluctuations in terms of trade for livestock products and the decreasing stock of livestock herd holdings (World Bank and DfID, 2019).<sup>6</sup> The violent resource-based inter-clan and other conflicts further complicate the vulnerability of the population in the ASALs.

## CPP increasingly recognise climate change

The Ethiopia CPP notes that the scale and impact of droughts in the recent past have been immense, occasionally decimating herds by as much as 50-80% in the case of cattle (Coppock et al., 2008<sup>7</sup>; Devereux, 2006<sup>8</sup>). A reduction in livestock holdings affects income inequality, given that livestock is the main livelihood asset among pastoralists. Such frequent shocks do not provide respite for recovery and make it extremely difficult to restock herds. This forces poor pastoralists to engage in alternative livelihoods that are high risk and detrimental to the environment, such as charcoal making.

In addition to the frequent occurrence of droughts, growth in human and livestock population, environmental degradation and bush encroachment, and mobility restrictions create unsustainable pressure on land and water resources and increase the vulnerability of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist populations to disasters

3. Mkutu, K. A (2005): Pastoralist conflict, governance and small arms in North Rift, North East Africa: The cases of Karamoja, Uganda; West Pokot; Dol Dot, Laikipia; and Baragoi, Samburu, Kenya. Political Science. University of Bradford.

4. Mwaura, C (2005): Kenya and Uganda Pastoral Conflict Case Study. Human Development Report 2005.

5. Headey, D. & A. Kennedy (2012): Enhancing Resilience in the Horn of Africa: Synthesis of an Evidence Based Workshop. <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utills/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/127078/filename/127289.pdf>

6. World Bank and DfID (2019): Poverty and Vulnerability in the Ethiopian Lowlands: Building a More Resilient Future.

7. Coppock, D.L., G. Gebru, S. Mesele, and S. Desta. (2008): Are drought-related crashes in pastoral cattle herds predictable? More evidence of equilibrium dynamics from the southern Ethiopian rangelands? in Multifunctional Grasslands in a Changing World, volume II, Edited by the Organizing Committee of the 2008 International Grasslands Congress/International Rangelands Congress (IGC/IRC). Guangdong People's Publishing House, Beijing.

8. Devereux, S. (2006): The Impact of Droughts and Floods on Food Security and Policy Options to Alleviate Negative Effects. International Association of Agricultural Economists (IAAE) conference Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Center, Queensland, Australia 12-18 August 2006.

and resulting conflict over dwindling resources. The Ethiopian CPP also notes that despite these negative aspects, pastoralists have coped with climate hazards for a long time, using mobility strategies for the sustainable management of drylands vegetation and water resources (Ethiopia CPP, 2012).<sup>9</sup> Pastoralists use planned livestock mobility patterns and livestock breeding that feed selectively on available pastures in the drylands. These combined vital strategies allow pastoralists to create economic value rather than mere survival under challenging environments. Indeed, pastoralism offers a comparative advantage and has immense potential for reducing poverty, generating economic growth, managing the environment, promoting sustainable development, and building climate resilience.

The Somalia CPP notes that besides aggravating poverty, other social impacts arise from droughts and climate change in dryland communities (Somalia CPP, 2012).<sup>10</sup> Specifically, environmental and socio-economic changes occurring in dryland areas have led to shifts in gender roles. Women - who were previously viewed as vulnerable and in need of care and protection - are now playing key roles in ensuring their families' survival.

The Uganda CPP acknowledges that pastoralists increasingly recognise the occurrence of climate change. Dry periods have become longer more frequent, while rainfall has been less regular. Many of the perennial rivers have turned into seasonal rivers (Stark, 2011).<sup>11</sup> Besides, overgrazing is rampant in the country's ASALs due to: (i) disruption of traditional transhumance corridors resulting in limitation to cattle movement (in many cases as a consequence of the change in land tenure policies from communal property to individual titling); (ii) gazettement of vast areas for natural parks; (iii) exploitation of mining deposits; (iv) land grabbing; and (v) limitation of movements due to insecurity and government policies. At the same time, animal diseases, growing inequity in animal ownership and climate change have all placed further pressures on the cattle-based livelihood systems.

## Impacts of climate change on women

The sustained experience of climatic shocks has affected the accumulation of human capital assets in the ASALs. For example, in Ethiopia, the ASAL regions of Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Somali and Afar perform poorly in human development outcomes and have the highest vulnerability to poverty. Furthermore, these ASAL regions are constrained to access schools. The distances to primary and secondary schools in the ASALs are an average of 1 km and 4.1 km, respectively, higher than those in the highlands (World Bank and DfID, 2019). The low human capital and assets (e.g. low school attainment, higher numbers of child deaths and poor nutrition) are significant causes of vulnerability in the ASALs attributable to the experience of climatic/environmental shocks.

The increase in climate variability and extremes still play a significant role in the declining trend in per capita food production growth. Conflict, violence, and diminished productivity in several parts of the IGAD region, which often cause migration and displacement, are critical contributors to hunger and food insecurity. The IGAD region also continues to face recurrent climatic shocks that will require emergency responses; and continues to suffer from some of the most protracted humanitarian crises worldwide. As such, the region is one of the leading producers and hosts of refugees and internally displaced persons worldwide.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remains a significant challenge in the IGAD region and is partly linked to polygamy and household resources' control. Previous research shows that women are more likely to be "disproportionately affected and exposed to risks, increased loss of livelihoods, GBV and even loss of life during and in the aftermath of disasters" (UN Report Version 2). Figure 1 shows the prevalence of GBV by women aged 15-49 years in three IGAD Member States, i.e. Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The chart compares the prevalence of GBV for the whole country compared to ASAL regions within each country. For all three countries, some ASAL sub-regions have prevalence rates higher than the national average. In Ethiopia, women from the Gambela sub-region have a slightly higher GBV prevalence (25.3% vs 23.3%).

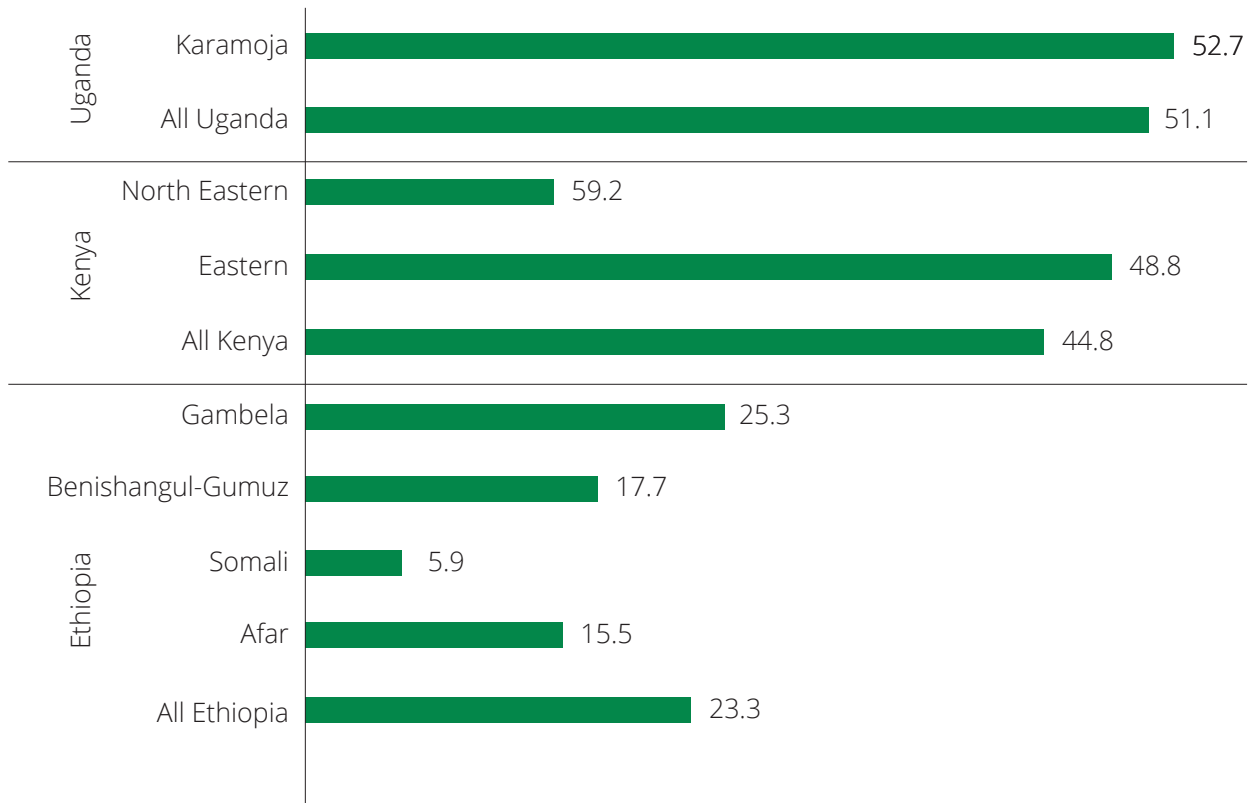
9. Ethiopia Country Programming Paper to End Drought Emergencies in the Horn of Africa. Document prepared with the support of the Technical Consortium (CGIAR & FAO), 26 September 2012.

10. Somalia Country Programming Paper to End Drought Emergencies in the Horn of Africa. Document prepared with the support of the Technical Consortium (CGIAR & FAO), 26 September 2012.

11. Stark Jeffrey, (2011): Climate Change and Conflict in Uganda: The Cattle Corridor and Karamoja.

Similarly, for Uganda, GBV experience in Karamoja is higher at 52.7%. Higher rates of intimate partner acts of violence are partly explained by the higher prevalence of GBV for polygamous marriages in the ASALs. Such gender inequalities make women highly vulnerable to livelihood insecurity in times of disaster. They negatively impact the region's economic and social development due to the underutilisation of available human resources.

Figure 1: Prevalence of GBV in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda



Sources: Central Statistical Agency, Ethiopia and ICF (2016)<sup>12</sup>, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics et al. (2015)<sup>13</sup> and Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and ICF (2018)<sup>14</sup>

Despite the differences, the potential women have and their knowledge and experiences are overlooked, and women's leadership in building resilience in communities is overlooked. Pre-existing gender inequalities constrain women and girls' influence and control over decisions governing their lives and their access to production resources such as finances, agricultural inputs, land and property, and technologies. Since women and men are affected differently by disaster and climate change, their different vulnerabilities and capacities must be analysed, and their gender-specific concerns and priorities addressed.

12. Central Statistical Agency (CSA) Ethiopia and ICF (2016). Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey 2016. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: CSA and ICF.

13. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics et al. (2015): The 2014 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey. Nairobi, Kenya KNBS and ICF International.

14. Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and ICF (2018): Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2016. Kampala, Uganda and Rockville, Maryland, USA: UBOS and ICF.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

### Member states

1. Adopt the use of climate change-adapted cropping systems (e.g. conservation agriculture, drought and extreme heat-tolerant crops) would offer sustainability through diversification and intensification opportunities.
2. National meteorological and hydrological services need to develop appropriate measures for gender-sensitive delivery of weather and climate information, including promoting women's participation, using medium, technology and language that is appropriate and accessible to women.
3. There is a need to strengthen the climate monitoring and reporting system in all drought-prone areas. This can be achieved by establishing and maintaining an early warning system to support weather monitoring.
4. Put in place a contingency planning system (as a crisis modifier mechanism). Furthermore, there is a need to involve women's groups, networks and organisations in all climate monitoring and climate change initiatives.
5. Document women's knowledge and experiences with climate change and natural resource management, share the same with policymakers and utilise policy influence information.
6. Budget for women-specific interventions on climate change. This is important because, without the funds, the initiatives will not be implemented.
7. Need for safety net measures to prevent and respond to GBV, e.g. rape in the wake of disaster-related displacement.

### IGAD

8. (Establish and support a network of academic research institutions involved in climate change and disaster risk management as a priority intervention. Support the regional network of research units/centres working around drought-prone areas to promote climate change adaptation and mitigation and spearhead the formulation of policies and interventions. Also, establish a network of academic institutions working in gender/women research.



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